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General Comment

[Edited by Gilbert Campbell Scoggin, The University of Missouri.]

Professor Chandler R. Post, of the departments of Greek and fine arts at Harvard University, is on leave of absence for the year, and with the rank of captain is military attaché of the American Embassy in Rome.

Professor George Willis Botsford, of Columbia University, died suddenly on December 13. He was a graduate of the University of Nebraska and held his doctorate from Cornell University. He taught Greek and Roman history at Harvard from 1895 to 1901 and then went to Columbia. He was the author of several books in his chosen field. His textbooks on Greek and Roman history have been widely used in secondary schools and colleges.

One of the finest private libraries in existence belongs to Mr. Henry E. Huntington, of New York. Among duplicates from this library, sold at the Anderson Galleries on December 10 and 11, was a very fine copy of Cicero's *Cato Major, or His Discourse of Old-Age: With Explanatory Notes*. This book, translated by James Logan, was published by Benjamin Franklin at Philadelphia in 1744, and is of considerable rarity. This particular copy, originally in the collection of George Brinley of Hartford, Connecticut, was sold along with no fewer than three other copies at the dispersal of the rarities of that bibliomaniacal gourmand; and at that time, almost forty years ago, it fetched two hundred and sixty dollars. What the recent figure was, I have not had the heart to inquire. I remember seeing a copy of this book in Manchester, England, when, after having been ruthlessly harassed as a probable German spy in the autumn of 1914, I fled to the smoky city and sought refuge in the precincts of the John Rylands Library. There through the kindness of the keeper I was shown the treasures of that matchless collection of classical books made famous by Dibden; and with special pride this rare American classical volume was laid before me.

Dr. Richard Mott Gummere, associate professor of Latin in Haverford College, has been appointed headmaster of the Penn Charter School in Philadelphia. Professor Gummere was graduated at Haverford in 1902 and he received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1907. He will take up his new duties at the close of the present academic year. The salvation of education in America at the present time rests largely in the power of our secondary schools. At an

earlier period the colleges by maintaining rigid entrance requirements insured good preparation for serious college work, and the student knew well some few things. But of late the higher institutions of learning have proved recreant to their trust and have opened their doors to all alike who can present testimony that they have a certain number of "units" to their credit. What the individual "units" are seems to be of less importance than the numerical total. The colleges themselves are aware of the situation but hesitate to practice exclusion. But it is a hopeful sign of discontent that appears in President Butler's report wherein he ventures to suggest that it may be necessary to introduce at Columbia a rigid selective draft in connection with candidates for admission. Not long since I heard of a rather disconcerting case which reflects an unfortunate tendency in secondary education. It was related to me by the father of the boy in question. This boy, a member of a family of strong literary predilections, was attending a large and famous eastern preparatory school. He had the habit (unheard of there, it would seem) of carrying about in his pocket a small volume of English verse. One day he was called aside by one of the most influential masters of the school. "Come now," said this supervisor of instruction for youth, "you must cut this out. It won't go here." This same school had inherited a practice of awarding prizes for distinction in studies. The same boy was awarded a literary prize that had been specially selected by the headmaster. It was a cheaply bound copy of some recent work by a very insignificant writer. This boy of taste rightly cast the book from him on reaching his room. I could not help contrasting with this a thing that had come to my notice some time before. I had taken lodgings in a small English town. When I was shown to my room, the first thing that caught my eye was a small shelf of attractively bound books. The landlady quickly explained that these were prizes that her boy had earned in the local school. From among these carefully chosen books I now recall only Goldsmith and Addison, but, one and all, they were permanent treasures, in content and in form. The owner of these books was not destined for college but he had been given considerable insight into the best in literature. This, I take it, is no small part of a school's function. It is certainly a thing of good omen to see a man pass from a college chair in order to direct the destinies of a preparatory school. In other countries some of the best-known scholars have given their energies to directing the education of boys. The results have always been advantageous to school and college alike.

Reader, if thou beest an honest scholar and a true lover of learning, thou hast perused the selection from the library of an American Philologist which, I trow, now lieth to hand on thy desk. There wilt thou find many an item that may tug violently at thy purse strings, but this should cause no blush of shame to suffuse thy cheeks. Ponderous folios in vellum, chubby quartos in old calf, and a numerous brood of smaller size but of no less dignity there await thy

pleasure. Scorn not the ancient lexicon of Ceratinus (No. 70) or that of Calepinus (No. 111) with the poor excuse that they are no longer "auf der Höhe." What classical lexicon is? Thou knowest from experience that the combined forces of Generals Liddell and Scott, even when closely followed by the forlorn hope of Van Herwerden, will scarcely enable thee to storm even the small fortresses of Solmsen and of Buck. Of course for a good old-fashioned heroic combat thou mayest still rely upon "the old guard" of Stephanus (No. 87), but if thou wouldst assail the redoubtable *CIG*, thou knowest that thou canst no longer rely upon that massed formation in the open; now thou must needs resort to trench warfare, which, if less showy, possibly requires greater patience and endurance. Thou art forced to make thy way slowly along devious paths that lead far from the light of day under cover of learned periodicals and occasional dissertations. An adequate Greek dictionary is more a matter of desire than even of remotest hope; and two of the greatest Grecians of our age, Richard Jebb and Ingram Bywater, could not agree even on the question of general plan for such a work, as thou canst see if thou wilt turn to the recent *Memoir* of the Oxford scholar (p. 122). So then "suspend not from thy nose" that venerable pair, Ceratinus and Calepinus. These very copies from the library of the American Philologist no doubt have assisted some honored "clerk" to a fuller appreciation of the beauties of the ancients. Everyone who hath a true love for letters will gladly give space on his shelves to a copy of the lexicon of Pasor. A copy of this book had an honorable place among the presses of that most human of men, Mr. Samuel Pepys, as he himself informs us; and that very copy may be seen to this day along with other volumes equally interesting, if the charmed stroller along the Cambridge "backs" will turn aside into the retired garden of Magdalene College. What though Lord Monboddo in his six volumes (the seventh never appeared!) *Of the Origin and Progress of Language* (No. 37) fails to stress that later doctrine of the *Junggrammatiker* with all their insistence, in season and out of season, upon the tyrannous rule of Sound Change and his faithful spouse Analogy? Perhaps the world had grown weary of that age-long struggle between the "analogists" and the "anomalists" which had been going on at least since the days of Aristarchus and his formidable rival, Crates of Mallos. In its stead, to thy relief, thou wilt find entertaining reading about tailed men and other such things so necessary to a proper understanding of our species. Though thou findest little there to anticipate the doctrine of Leskien, Brugmann, Osthoff, and Paul, verily shalt thou find a considerable foreshadowing of the teaching of Darwin. Thou shouldst remember withal that the distinguished physician of Henry the Eighth, Dr. Andrew Board, in his introduction to Scogin's *Jests* (full of witty mirth and pleasant shifts), hath reminded his readers that "there is nothing beside the goodness of God, that preserves health so much as honest mirth used at dinner and supper, and mirth towards bed." Although thou beest an expert etymologist and one well trained in the history of words, and accustomed to consult such masterly works as the

Oxford Dictionary and the *St. Petersburg Lexicon* (which last still stands unrivaled in the field of lexicography), thou wilt all the more find interest in Edward Phillips' *New World of Words* (No. 40). Naturally enough this work will contain little scientific philology, but it is chock full of human nature and its foibles; and an acquaintance with its origin and history will bring thee indirectly into contact with that great man, John Milton. Then, too, if thou hast sporting blood in thy veins, thou shalt have staged before thee a very pretty literary quarrel, well-nigh surpassing the one which thou hast witnessed in thine own day under the auspices of those great scholars, Whitney and Max Müller. Many pleasant by-paths will open before thee, and perchance thou mayest take the one leading to that great storehouse of literary lore, old Anthony à Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses* (my favorite edition of which was edited by Philip Bliss in the year 1813, four volumes folio, weighing each, on imperial paper, nigh on to two stone). Turning to volume four, page 659, of this mastodon among books, and reading what is there indited about the said Phillips, thou canst not wonder that Anthony, in spite of his remarkable fearlessness, had planned that a new edition would be more safely printed in Holland; nor will it seem strange that on his deathbed he doubted that his executor would have the courage to print it anywhere. These few books, reader, gathered at random from this catalogue, all played a very important part in the scholarship of their day and have contributed no little to the world's store of knowledge. For this reason alone, if for no other, they deserve an honored place on the shelves of the scholar's study, and are not to be consigned to his attic or his cellar. Buy Liberty Bonds, for if thou beest a true scholar thou must also be a loyal patriot. The insurance of future peace is so necessary for the work of the scholar and for the preservation of the fruits of his work, as is so piteously testified by the sad fate of Louvain. But with all thy buying, buy books also, for these are the channels whereby learning is transmitted to future generations of scholars. If thou doest thy duty herein, thou mayest be assured that at some future time there will arise a grateful soul who will call thee blessed. Thou wilt remember how the sainted Jerome hath said, "The same man cannot love both gold and books." And that prince of book-lovers, Richard de Bury, hath insisted that "no dearness of price ought to hinder a man from the buying of books if he has the money that is demanded for them." "If he has the money"—ah, there's the rub. If thou canst not buy both bonds and books, then being the true patriot that thou art, thou wilt buy a—but stay, reader, be not rash and overhasty. Why not have recourse to the *Sortes Virgilianae*? The gentle Virgil was a scholar and a lover of books. Who knows but that his sympathetic spirit may influence a result which thy conscience would not have allowed thee to choose of thine own free will?